

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended): An integral plastic and metal part comprising:

a metal component having a first opening therein; and

a plastic component disposed about at least a portion of said metal component, said plastic component being comprised of a plastic material, said plastic material extending through said first opening and including a flange on one side thereof for securing said plastic component with said metal component in fixed relationship therebetween;

wherein said plastic component includes at least one integrally formed connection member extending outwardly therefrom, said at least one connection member having an area defining at least one connection portion formed therein, wherein said at least one connection portion is operable to receive a fastening member so as to permit said plastic component to be fastened to at least one other component;

wherein at least a portion of said plastic component extends about and envelopes an external surface of said metal component.

2. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first opening is defined by edges, said flange extending outwardly of said edges on one side of said first opening and said plastic material extending beyond said edge on the opposite side of said opening.

3. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 1 wherein said flange is annular.

4. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 1 wherein said flange is rectangular.
5. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 1 wherein said plastic part includes ribs.
6. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 1 wherein said metal component comprises a closed cross section.
7. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 6 wherein said metal component includes a second opening thereon.
8. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 7 wherein said second opening is disposed on said metal component opposite said first opening.
9. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 1 wherein said edge of said first opening is curved.
10. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 9 wherein said flange extends beyond said curved edge of said first opening.
11. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 7 wherein said second opening is defined by a second edge in said metal component, said second edge being folded.
12. (Canceled)

13. (Original): A part as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first opening comprises a series of openings.

14. (Withdrawn): A method of attaching a plastic component to a metal component comprising the steps of:

providing a metal component having a first opening therein;
placing the metal component in a die;
positioning a tool on one side of the first opening; and
molding the plastic component about at least a portion of the metal component and through the first opening, such that plastic component forms a flange on one side of the first opening for securing the plastic component with the metal component.

15. (Withdrawn): A method as set forth in claim 14 wherein the first opening is defined by an edge and said method further comprises curving the edge.

16. (Withdrawn): A method as set forth in claim 14 wherein the metal component comprises a closed cross section.

17. (Withdrawn): A method as set forth in claim 16 wherein said metal component includes a second opening defined by a second edge.

18. (Withdrawn): A method as set forth in claim 17 further comprising bending the second edge of the metal component.

19. (Withdrawn): A method as set forth in claim 17 further comprising positioning the tool on one side of the first opening by inserting the tool through the second opening.

20. (Withdrawn): A method as set forth in claim 14 further comprising molding ribs into the plastic component.

21. (Withdrawn): A method as set forth in claim 13 wherein the flange extends beyond the edge of the first opening.

22. (Previously Presented): An integral plastic and metal part comprising:
a metal component having a closed cross section defining an interior and exterior and having a first opening therein from the interior to the exterior; and
a plastic component disposed about at least a portion of said exterior of said metal component, said plastic material extending through said first opening and including a flange on said interior thereof for securing said plastic component with said metal component in fixed relationship therebetween;

wherein said plastic component includes at least one integrally formed connection member extending outwardly therefrom, said at least one connection member having an area defining at least one connection portion formed therein, wherein said at least one connection portion is operable to receive a fastening member so as to permit said plastic component to be fastened to at least one other component.

23. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 22 wherein said first opening is defined by edges, said flange extending outwardly of said edges on one side of said first opening and said plastic material extending beyond said edge on the opposite side of said opening.

24. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 22 wherein said flange is rectangular.

25. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 22 wherein said flange is rectangular.

26. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 22 wherein said plastic part includes ribs.

27. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 22 wherein said metal component includes a second opening thereon.

28. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 27 wherein said second opening is disposed on said metal component opposite said first opening.

29. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 22 wherein said edge of said first opening is curved.

30. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 29 wherein said flange extends beyond said curved edge of said first opening.

31. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 27 wherein said second opening is defined by a second edge in said metal component, said second edge being folded.

32. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 22 wherein said plastic part includes attachment holes therethrough.

33. (Previously Presented): A part as set forth in claim 22 wherein said first opening comprises a series of openings.